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Former CIA chief defends agency, students heckle

William E. Colby, the former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, defended its past actions yesterday amid boos and catcalls from Iranian students in the auditorium of Jersey City State College.

The protesting students carried signs which read "Down with American Imperialism."

They also shouted chants of "Down with the CIA and down with Colby."

When the disruptive, chanting students were seated in the Margaret Williams Auditorium on the college campus, Colby, approached the podium, shrugged off the protests, saying they had a right to "express their own opinions."

"Now if you would give me a chance I will express my role as director of the CIA for three years.

Colby told the group the function of the CIA is to gather information on the development of other countries. Even during Biblical times, he said, there were people who were sent out by their leaders to gather information on the development of other nations.

If the CIA was guilty of any wrong doing, it was only in the best interest of our country, he said.

When he became director, Colby said he ordered a report of the activities which were being carried out by the CIA, and issued policies and guide lines to make sure those he found offensive would never again be taken by the CIA, he said.

One of the activities in which the CIA does not take part is assassination of political leaders, according to Colby.

"The agency was only involved in one assassination plot and that was in 1961, when agents tried to assassinate Premier Fidel Castro," Colby said.

"The CIA has given assistance to friendly nations around the world," Colby said.

"Some of the programs we tried

to set up were not successful. Some of the policies of the agency were wrong. If you were to find a corrupt police officer in your local police department, you wouldn't decide that you no longer needed a police department. You would try to correct the problem within the department.

"It's the same with the CIA," he contended. If the agency has problems that doesn't mean we must do away with the organization. It must continue to serve in the best interest of our country and that of countries around the world which are friendly with ours, Colby concluded.

Colby's appearance was sponsored by the History Club and the Student Government of the college.

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